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Chasman et al.

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(54) **SLOTTED MULTI-NOZZLE GRID WITH INTEGRATED COOLING CHANNELS**

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CPC ... **F02K 9/30** (2013.01); **F02K 9/97** (2013.01);
F02K 9/972 (2013.01); **Y10T 29/49346** (2015.01)

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Y10T 29/49346
USPC 60/263, 200.1, 265, 229
See application file for complete search history.

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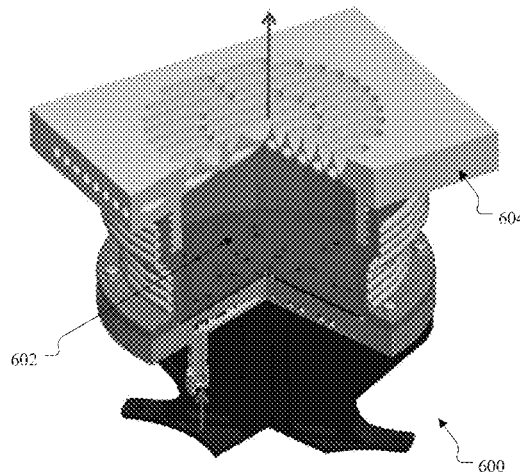
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Assistant Examiner — Jason H Duger

(57) **ABSTRACT**

An apparatus includes a slotted multi-nozzle grid with a plate having multiple elongated slotlettes through the plate. Each of at least some of the slotlettes has a convergent input, a divergent output, and a narrower throat portion separating the convergent input and the divergent output. At least some of the slotlettes are arranged in multiple rows. The plate further includes multiple cooling channels through the plate. At least some of the cooling channels are located between the rows of slotlettes. Each cooling channel is configured to transport coolant through the plate in order to cool the plate, such as to cool the plate as hot combustion gases pass through the plate. Each of at least some of the rows may include at least two slotlettes, and two adjacent slotlettes in one row may be separated by a structural ligament (which may have a tear-drop cross-sectional shape).

20 Claims, 8 Drawing Sheets



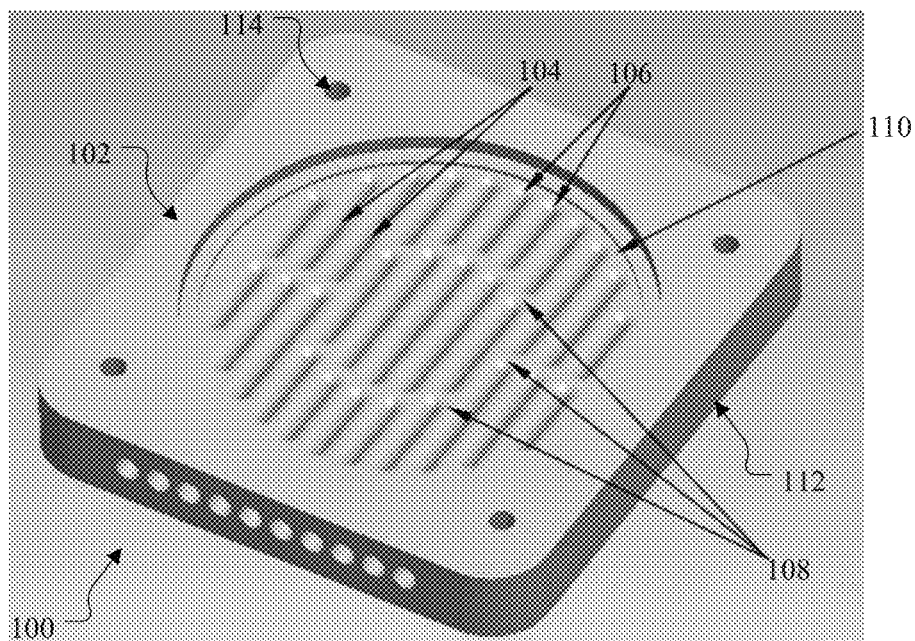


FIG. 1A

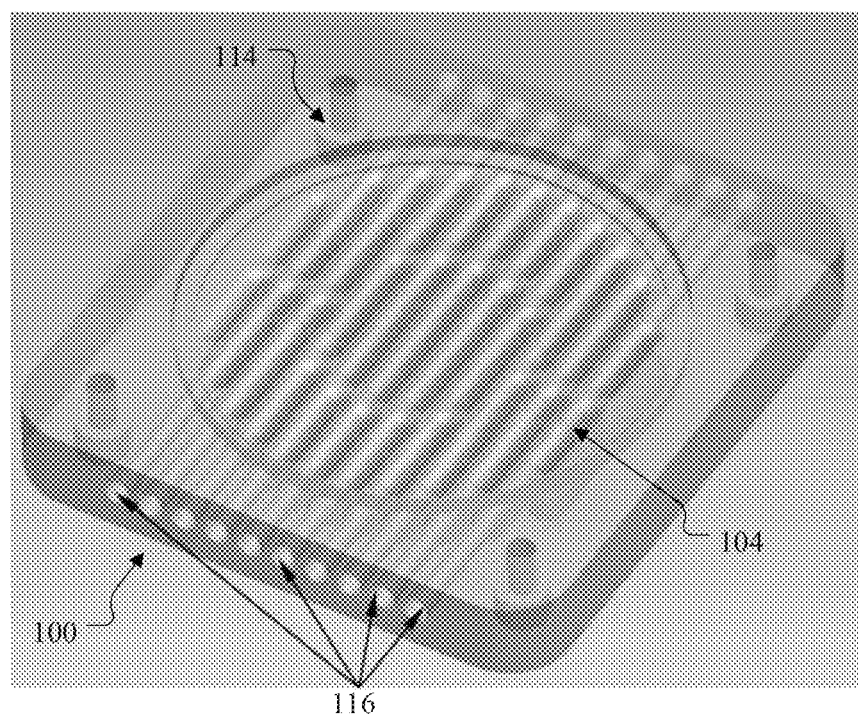


FIG. 1B

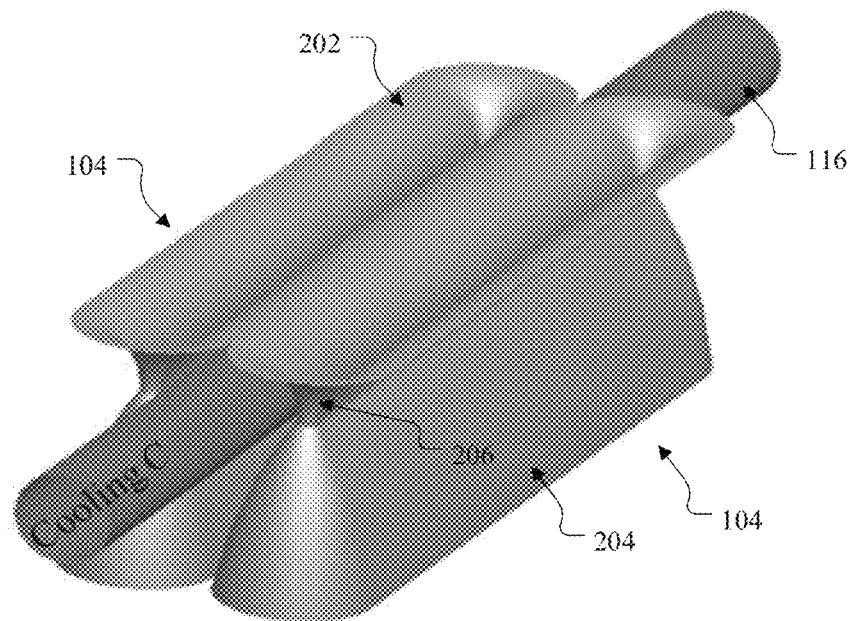


FIG. 2

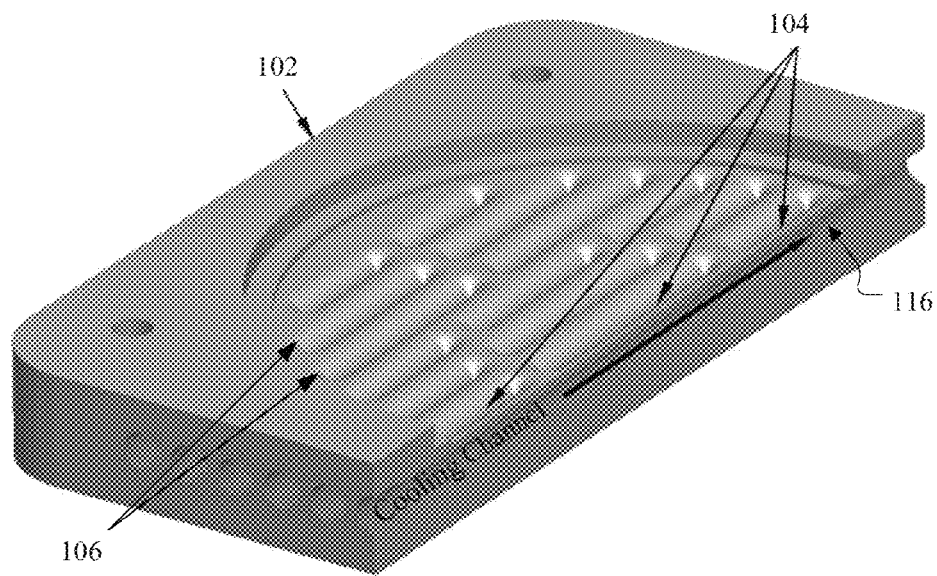


FIG. 3

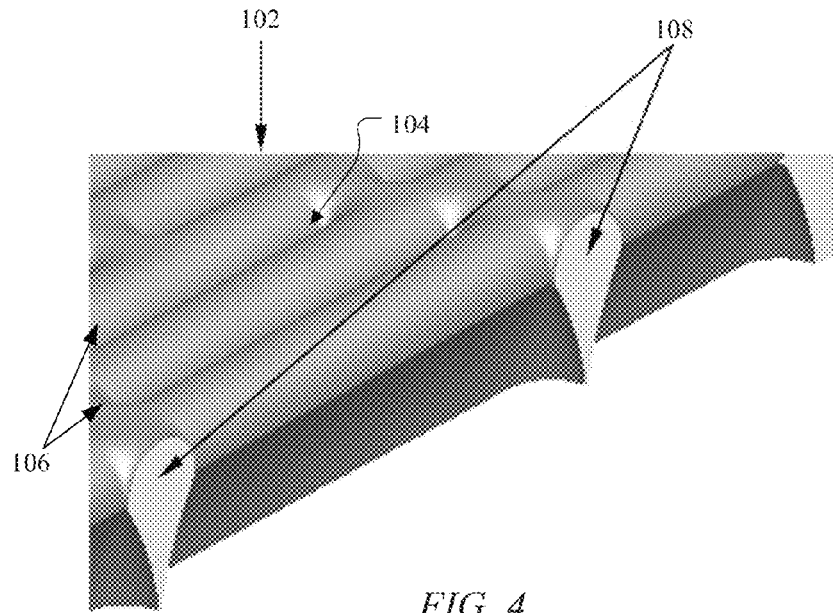


FIG. 4

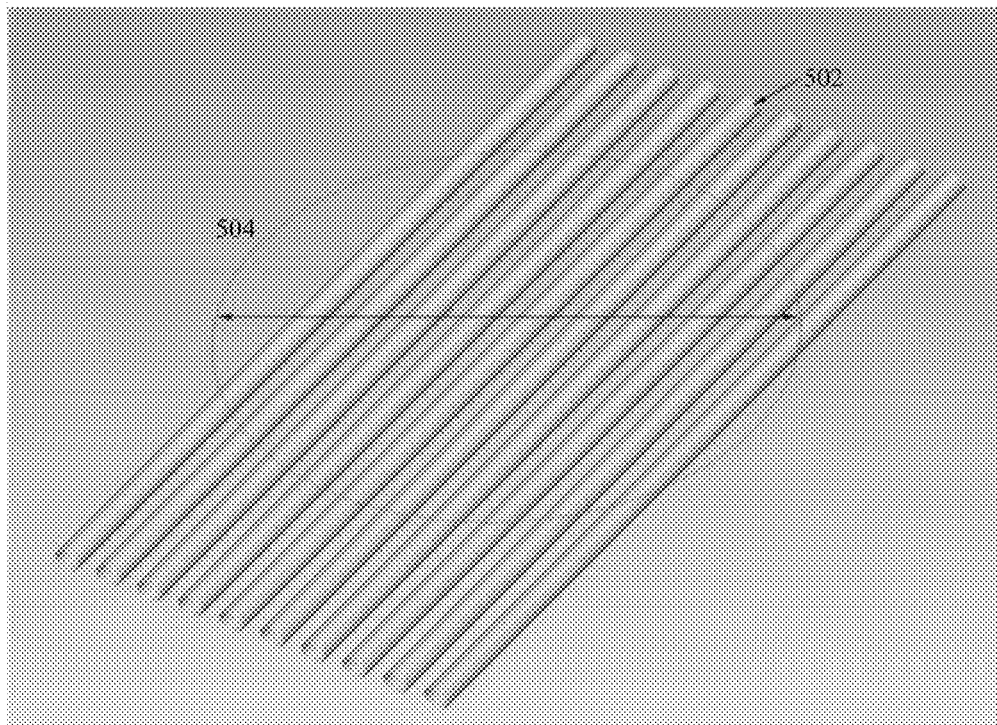


FIG. 5A

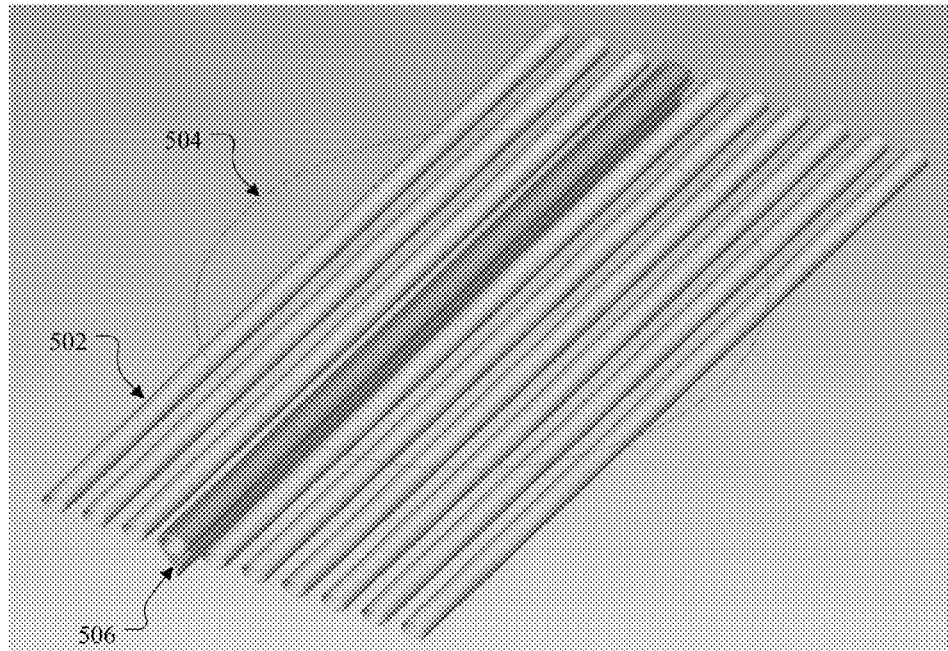


FIG. 5B

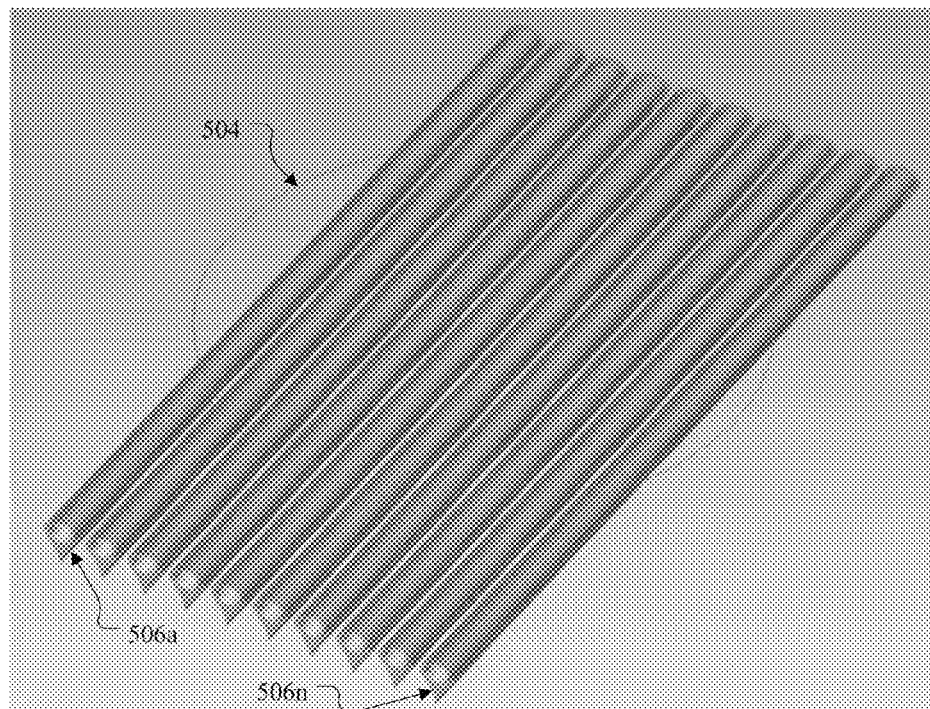


FIG. 5C

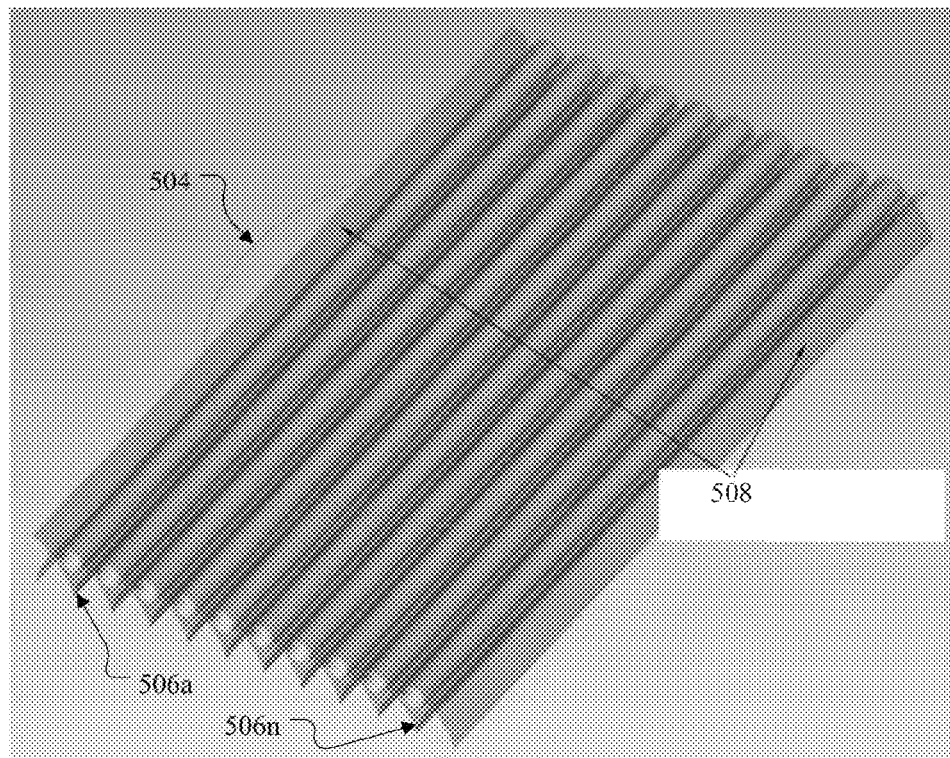


FIG. 5D

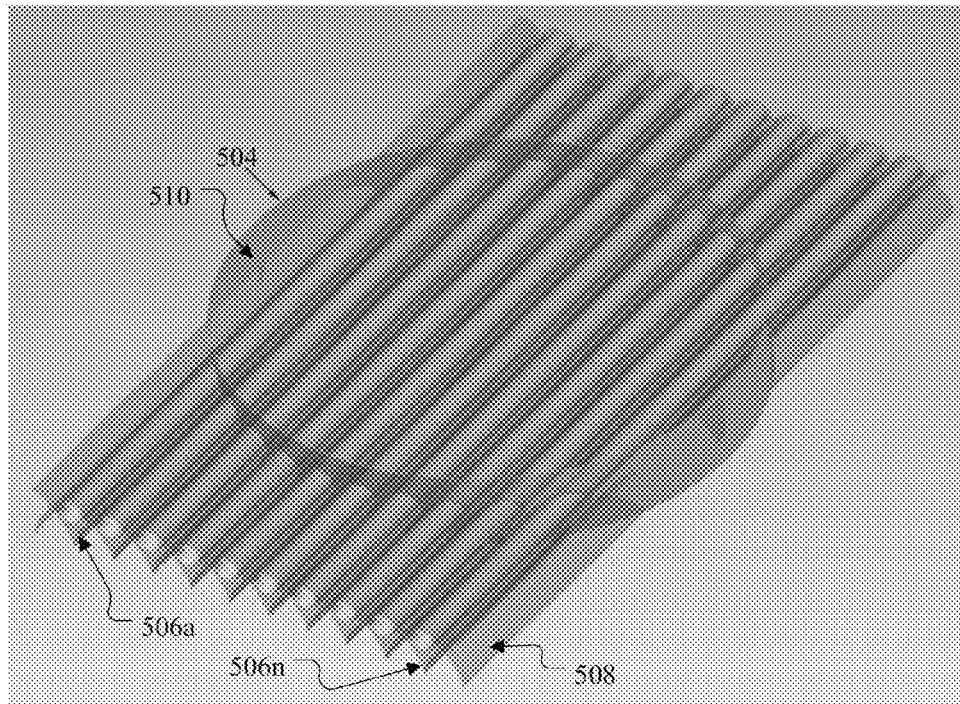


FIG. 5E

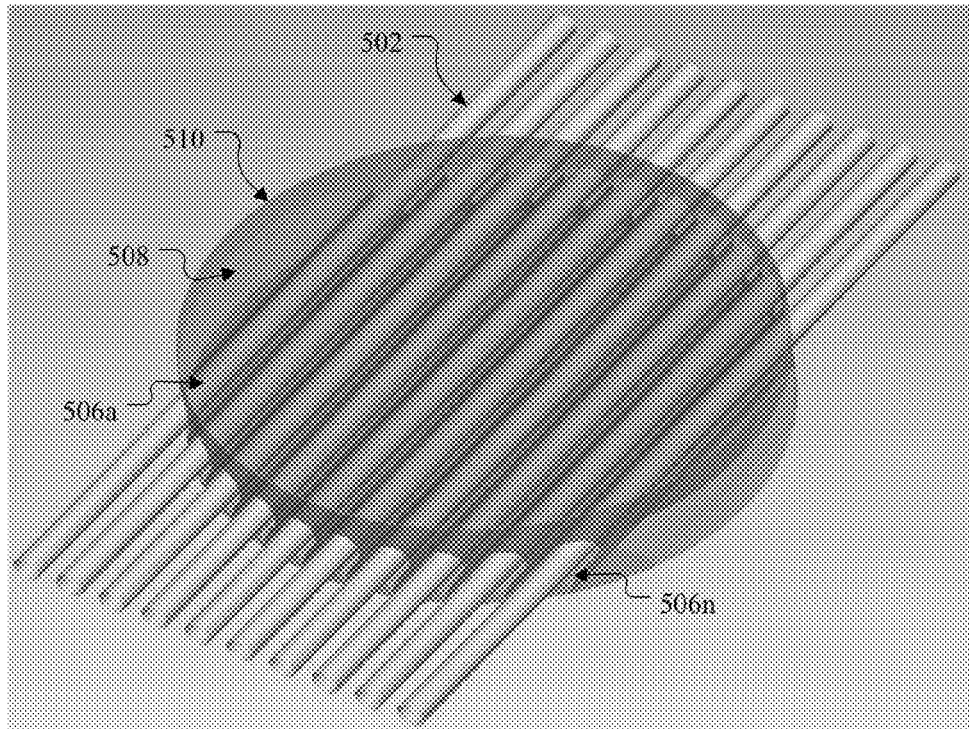


FIG. 5F

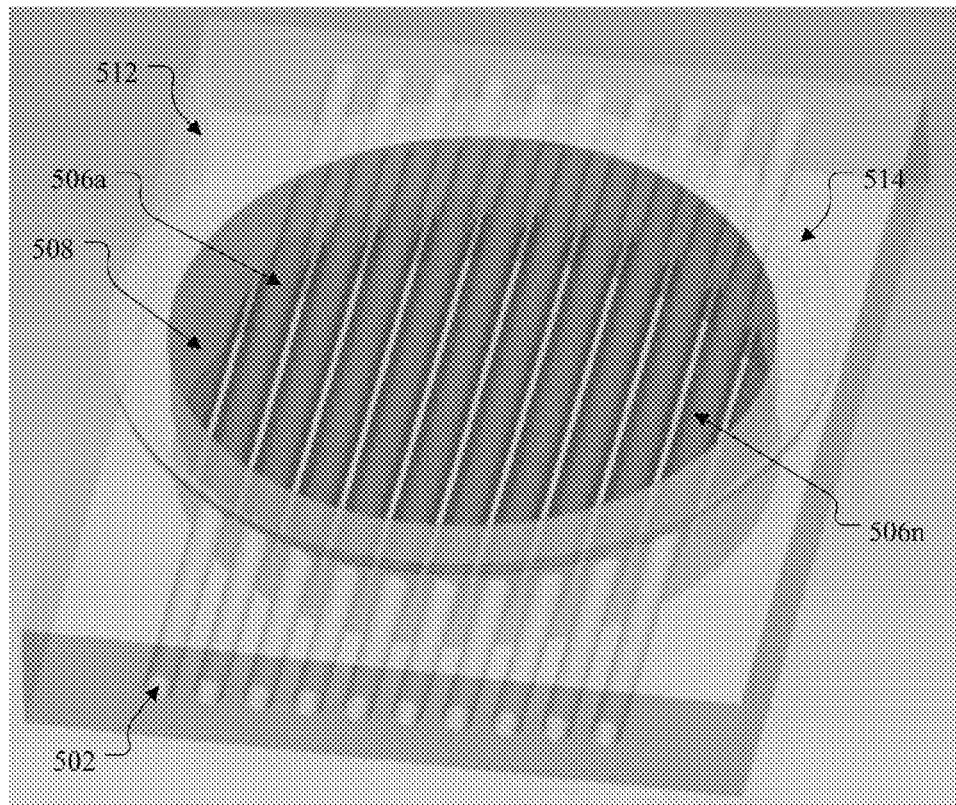


FIG. 5G

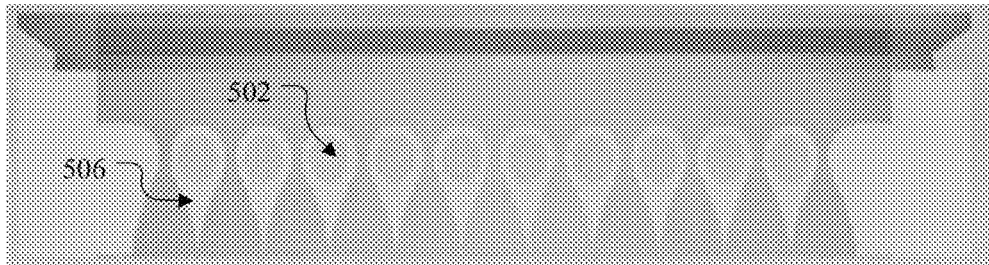


FIG. 5H

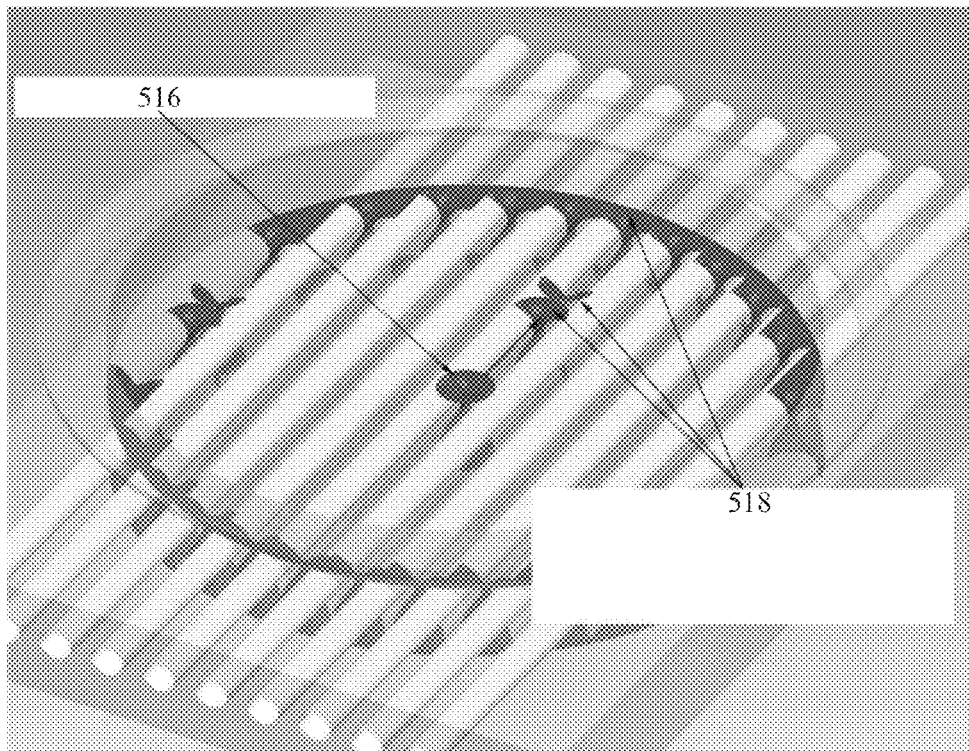
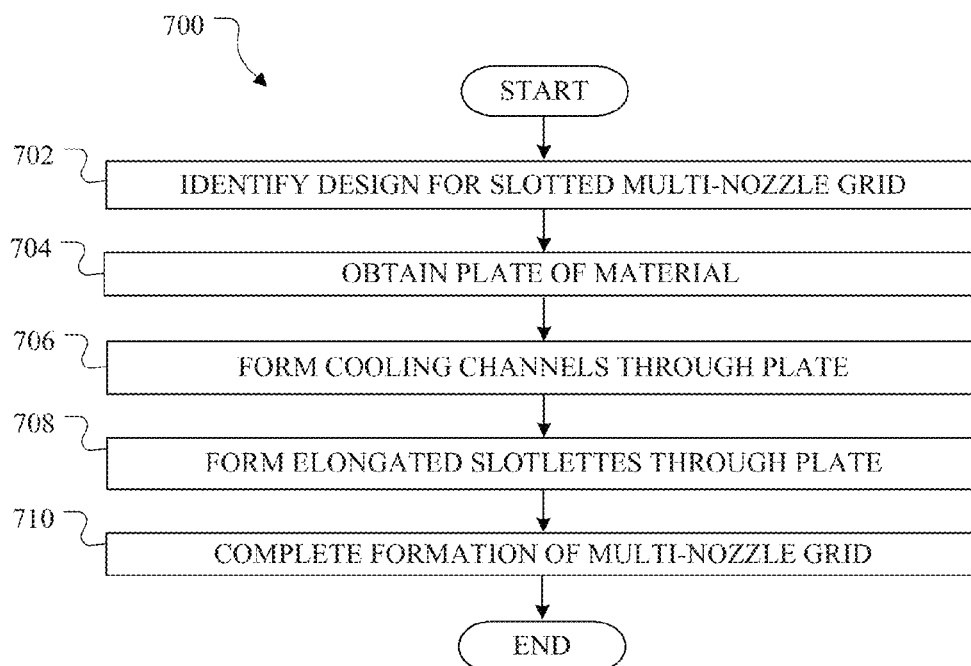
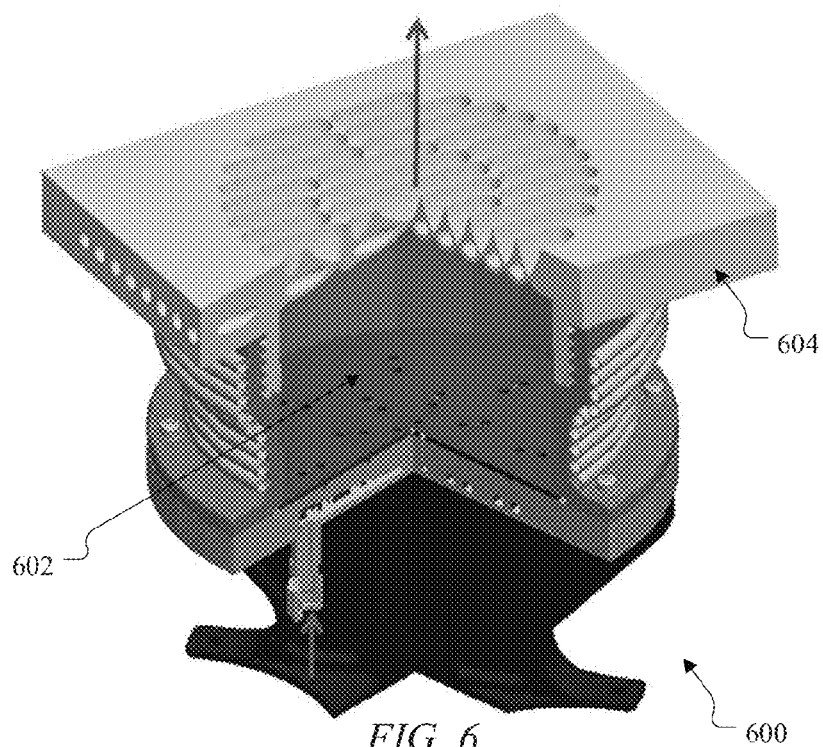


FIG. 5I



1

SLOTTED MULTI-NOZZLE GRID WITH INTEGRATED COOLING CHANNELS

TECHNICAL FIELD

This disclosure is generally directed to propulsion systems. More specifically, this disclosure relates to a slotted multi-nozzle grid (MNG) with integrated cooling channels.

BACKGROUND

Certain types of vehicles, such as rockets, include one or more nozzles as part of a liquid propulsion system. In a liquid propulsion system, a liquid propellant is ignited, and one or more nozzles expand and accelerate the resulting combustion gases. As a result, the gases exit the nozzles at very high speeds, propelling the vehicle in a desired direction.

Cylindrical- or cone-shaped nozzles have been used for many years. Unfortunately, these types of nozzles are often quite large. As a result, these types of nozzles may not be desirable in certain situations due to volume or weight limitations. A multi-nozzle grid (MNG) is a two-dimensional or three-dimensional collection of small nozzles called "nozzlettes" in a grid pattern. A multi-nozzle grid can provide the same performance as a conventional cylindrical- or cone-shaped nozzle but in a much smaller space.

SUMMARY

This disclosure provides a slotted multi-nozzle grid (MNG) with integrated cooling channels. The cooling channels are configured to utilize a coolant to remove heat energy from the MNG, such as when hot combustion gases flow through the MNG, thereby helping to prevent the MNG from being damaged by the heat energy.

In a first embodiment, an apparatus includes a slotted multi-nozzle grid with a plate having multiple elongated slotlettes through the plate. Each of at least some of the slotlettes has a convergent input, a divergent output, and a narrower throat portion separating the convergent input and the divergent output. At least some of the slotlettes are arranged in multiple rows. The plate further includes multiple cooling channels through the plate. At least some of the cooling channels are located between the rows of slotlettes. Each cooling channel is configured to transport coolant through the plate in order to cool the plate.

In a second embodiment, a system includes a combustion chamber configured to generate combustion gases. The system also includes a slotted multi-nozzle grid connected to an outlet of the combustion chamber and through which at least some of the combustion gases pass. The slotted multi-nozzle grid includes a plate. The plate includes multiple elongated slotlettes through the plate. Each of at least some of the slotlettes has a convergent input, a divergent output, and a narrower throat portion separating the convergent input and the divergent output. At least some of the slotlettes are arranged in multiple rows. The plate also includes multiple cooling channels through the plate. At least some of the cooling channels are located between the rows of slotlettes. Each cooling channel is configured to transport coolant through the plate in order to cool the plate.

In a third embodiment, a method includes forming a slotted multi-nozzle grid having a plate. Forming the slotted multi-nozzle grid includes forming multiple elongated slotlettes through the plate. Each of at least some of the slotlettes has a convergent input, a divergent output, and a narrower throat portion separating the convergent input and the divergent

2

output. At least some of the slotlettes are arranged in multiple rows. Forming the slotted multi-nozzle grid also includes forming multiple cooling channels through the plate. At least some of the cooling channels are located between the rows of slotlettes. Each cooling channel is configured to transport coolant through the plate in order to cool the plate.

Other technical features may be readily apparent to one skilled in the art from the following figures, descriptions, and claims.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

For a more complete understanding of this disclosure and its features, reference is now made to the following description, taken in conjunction with the accompanying drawings, in which:

FIGS. 1A and 1B illustrate an example slotted multi-nozzle grid (MNG) with integrated cooling channels in accordance with this disclosure;

FIGS. 2 through 4 illustrate example components in a slotted MNG in accordance with this disclosure;

FIGS. 5A through 5I illustrate an example technique for identifying a design geometry of a slotted MNG in accordance with this disclosure;

FIG. 6 illustrates an example engine and nozzle assembly of a vehicle with a slotted MNG in accordance with this disclosure; and

FIG. 7 illustrates an example method for forming a slotted MNG with integrated cooling channels in accordance with this disclosure.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

FIGS. 1 through 7, described below, and the various embodiments used to describe the principles of the present invention in this patent document are by way of illustration only and should not be construed in any way to limit the scope of the invention. Those skilled in the art will understand that the principles of the present invention may be implemented in any type of suitably arranged device or system.

FIGS. 1A and 1B illustrate an example slotted multi-nozzle grid (MNG) 100 with integrated cooling channels in accordance with this disclosure. As shown in FIG. 1A, the MNG 100 includes a plate 102 having multiple slotlettes 104 formed through the plate 102. The slotlettes 104 allow combustion gases or other material to pass through the plate 102 during operation of a larger device or system. The use of multiple slotlettes 104 in the plate 102 can help ease production requirements and yet allow the MNG 100 to conform to the laws of fluid mechanics, thermodynamics, and structural mechanics. Moreover, the use of multiple slotlettes 104 in the plate 102 can help to shorten the overall length of the MNG 100 compared to conventional nozzles, which could be useful in applications where volume or mass limitations prevent use of conventional nozzles. The MNG 100 could be used in any suitable device or system. As particular examples, the MNG 100 could be used in third-stage rocket motors, divert thrusters, and thrusters of attitude control systems.

The plate 102 could be formed from any suitable material (s) and in any suitable manner. For example, the plate 102 could represent a single machined piece or a molded plate of a homogenous monolithic material or composite material. Each slotlette 104 could represent any suitable elongated nozzle structure. The MNG 100 could include any suitable number of slotlettes 104 in any suitable configuration.

In this example, the slotlettes 104 are arranged in multiple rows 106, and adjacent slotlettes 104 in a row 106 are separated by a distance 108.

rated by structural ligaments **108**. The structural ligaments **108** help to maintain the structural strength and stiffness of the slotted plate **102**. The number of slotlettes **104** in a row **106** (and thus the number of structural ligaments **108** in a row **106**) can vary and may be determined by performance (such as volume flow and velocity of discharge gases) and structural requirements of the desired application. The total number of rows **106** in the plate **102** can also be determined by the desired performance and structural requirements of the MNG **100**. Each structural ligament **108** includes any suitable portion of a plate between slotlettes in a row of slotlettes.

In this example, an upper surface **110** of the MNG **100** represents the convergent side of the MNG **100**, and a lower surface **112** of the MNG **100** represents the divergent side of the MNG **100**. Gas enters the slotlettes **104** from the convergent side and exits the slotlettes **104** on the divergent side. The plate **102** also includes multiple flanges **114** that allow bolts or other connectors to couple the plate **102** to a combustion chamber or other structure so that material flows into the MNG **100** through the surface **110**.

As shown in FIGS. 1A and 1B, the plate **102** includes multiple cooling channels **116**. The cooling channels **116** denote substantially straight elongated orifices or paths through which coolant can flow through the plate **102**. The cooling channels **116** can be parallel and coplanar as shown here. The cooling channels **116** are interdigitated or interleaved between the rows **106** of slotlettes **104**. However, the cooling channels **116** could be arranged in other geometries or in a pattern with headers and multiple connecting channels between headers.

Each cooling channel **116** represents any suitable passageway for coolant to flow through a multi-grid nozzle. In this example, each cooling channel **116** represents a generally cylindrical passageway with wider ends, although any other suitable cross-sectional shape(s) could be used. Any suitable coolant can be used in the cooling channels **116**, such as a liquid fuel, an oxidizer, water, a water and ethylene glycol mixture, atmospheric gas, or cryogenic gas.

As shown in FIG. 3 described below, the slotlettes **104** are supported by ribs that form three-dimensional endings of the slotlettes **104**, thus providing both efficient flow accelerators in converging-diverging nozzles and structural reinforcements. The rows **106** of slotlettes **104** in FIG. 1A bound the structural tubes that contain the cooling channels **118**, allowing coolant to flow through the cooling channels **118** and through the plate **102** to transfer heat from the plate **102** to the coolant.

Among other things, the use of the cooling channels **116** facilitates efficient heat removal from the plate **102**. The cooling channels **116** here are substantially straight, which can facilitate higher mass flow of coolant through the cooling channels **116** and therefore greater heat removal. Moreover, the plate **102** can include variable-length slotlettes **104** separated by structural ligaments **108**, which help to create a strong and stiff plate **102**. Depending on the application, these features could provide various advantages, such as the ability to perform longer-duration thrusts using a rocket or other liquid propulsion system.

Although FIGS. 1A and 1B illustrate one example of a slotted MNG **100** with integrated cooling channels **116**, various changes may be made to FIGS. 1A and 1B. For example, the relative size and shape of each component in FIGS. 1A and 1B are for illustration only. Each component in the MNG **100** could have any suitable size, shape, and dimensions. Also, the arrangement of the slotlettes **104** in FIGS. 1A and 1B is for illustration only. An MNG could have any suitable number of slotlettes **104** in any suitable arrangement.

FIGS. 2 through 4 illustrate example components in a slotted MNG **100** in accordance with this disclosure. As shown in FIG. 2, two slotlettes **104** are shown along with a cooling channel **116**. A conventional MNG nozzle's geometry is typically a revolved surface. The geometry of a slotlette **104** can be viewed as a conventional nozzle that is cut in half and translated (stretched) to a desired length, where surfaces connect the two halves so that the surfaces are tangent to the edges of the halves and form the desired slotlette **104**. In FIG. 2, each slotlette **104** includes a convergent input **202** and a divergent output **204**. Both the convergent input **202** and the divergent output **204** have substantially straight sides and rounded ends, and the divergent output **204** has a larger height than the convergent input **202**. Each slotlette **104** also includes a narrower throat portion **206** that separates the convergent input and the divergent output and that allows expansion of gases from the convergent input **202** into the divergent output **204**, providing acceleration.

As shown in FIGS. 2 and 3, each of the cooling channels **116** is located between adjacent rows **106** of slotlettes **104**. In particular, slotlettes in adjacent rows **106** have convergent inputs **202** that angle towards one another, divergent outputs **204** that angle towards one another, and a cooling channel **116** that resides within the area between the convergent inputs **202** and divergent outputs **204** of the slotlettes in adjacent rows. In some embodiments, the cooling channels **116** represent areas of the plate **102** that have been removed, such as via drilling or other suitable processing technique. Here, the cooling channels **116** traverse across the plate **102** so that during combustion, for example, heat generated in a combustion chamber is transferred through the plate **102** into the coolant flowing through the cooling channels **116**. The unique geometry of the slotlettes **104** allows the cooling channels **116** to pass through the plate **102** from one side and exit through the other side. This transfers heat from the convergent side of the plate **102** through the walls of the otherwise solid plate **102** and into the cooling channels **116**.

FIG. 4 illustrates an example of the structural ligaments **108** in the MNG **100**. Each structural ligament **108** shown is bounded by the end of one slotlette **104** in a row **106** and the beginning of another slotlette **104** in the same row **106**. The material between the slotlettes **104** provides the structural material for strength and stiffness of the plate **102**. Each structural ligament **108** here has a tear-drop shape in cross-section, and the design of the tear-drop shape can be modified depending on the application.

Although FIGS. 2 through 4 illustrate examples of components in a slotted MNG **100**, various changes may be made to FIGS. 2 through 4. For example, the slotlettes **104** could have any suitable size and shape. Also, each structural ligament **108** could have any other suitable size and cross-sectional shape. In addition, note that the slotlettes **104** shown here are configured to receive hot gases and direct the hot gases in the same general direction. However, at least some of the slotlettes **104** could have angled portions to direct thrust in other directions.

FIGS. 5A through 5I illustrate an example technique for identifying a design geometry of a slotted MNG in accordance with this disclosure. In this example, the design begins with multiple straight tubes **502** laying side-by-side as shown in FIG. 5A. These tubes **502** denote areas where the cooling channels **116** are to be formed. In some embodiments, the center line of each tube **502** lies in the same plane, the tubes **502** are parallel to each other, there is an equal offset distance between each adjacent pair of tubes **502**, and all tubes **502** have the same diameter. The tubes' center-to-center offset and diameter can be determined in any suitable manner, such

5

as based on performance, cooling and structural analysis. Also, the number of slotlette rows and tubes can be determined in any suitable manner, such as the diameter of a port's bounding circle **504** and manufacturing limits.

As shown in FIG. **5B**, the geometry surrounding each cooling tube **502** forms a structural rib **506**. In this example, the structural rib **506** has a tear-drop or airfoil shape in cross-section, which can help to minimize stagnation zones. This structural rib **506** extends across the bounding circle **504** of the port. The rib geometry forms half of one row of slotlettes and half of a neighboring row of slotlettes. Likewise, a tube **502** encased by the structure forms one of the cooling channels **116** described above. This is repeated for each cooling tube **502**, creating multiple straight structural ribs **506a-506n** as shown in FIG. **5C**. Outboard surface slots **508** intersect the bounding circle **504** of the port as shown in FIG. **5D**. The outboard surface slots **508** represent "unslotted" areas of the MNG adjacent to the outer cooling tubes **502**. With the definition of the outboard surface slots **508**, the geometry of the ribs is completed.

As shown in FIG. **5E**, the bounding circle **504** is extended to form a ring **510** around a portion of the ribs **506a-506n**. Here, the ring **510** defines the outer limits of the ribs **506a-506n**. As shown in FIG. **5F**, the geometry of the ribs **506a-506n** is bounded by the ring **510**, so the ribs **506a-506n** no longer extend outside of the ring **510**.

As shown in FIG. **5G**, surfaces **512** define the outer geometry of the plate **102**. The surfaces **512** therefore identify the solid portions of the plate **102** (which forms the thermal mass), and the cooling tubes **502** traverse the entire length of the plate. The size of the plate **102** may be determined by a tradeoff between how much thermal mass is needed versus how much mass can be saved. The side surfaces of the ribs **506a-506n** form the walls or outer surfaces of slotlettes to be fabricated. A portion **514** of the plate is raised, which could be sized to fit within a combustion chamber or other structure. FIG. **5H** shows a side view of the structure of FIG. **5G**, with each cooling cylinder **502** is surrounded by a rib **506**. The airfoil or tear-drop shape of the cross section is apparent here.

As shown in FIG. **5I**, slotlettes are defined between the ribs **506a-506n**. A classic nozzle **516** is shown here for illustrative purposes only. To form a slotlette, the nozzle **516** can be divided in half, and the halves **518** can be separated from one another. Each slotlette is then formed using two separated halves **518**. Each slotlette therefore represents a nozzle **516** that is stretched in one axis to make a longer slotlette. The ends of each slotlette share the geometry of the structural ligaments **108**. As can be seen here, the resulting cooling channels are interdigitated between slotlettes, and slotlettes are of varying length to form the structural ligaments.

Although FIGS. **5A** through **5I** illustrate one example of a technique for identifying a design geometry of a slotted MNG, various changes may be made to FIGS. **5A** through **5I**. For example, any other suitable technique could be used to design a slotted MNG.

FIG. **6** illustrates an example engine and nozzle assembly **600** of a vehicle with a slotted MNG in accordance with this disclosure. As shown in FIG. **6**, the assembly **600** includes a liquid propulsion system having a combustion chamber **602**. An outlet of the combustion chamber **602** is covered by a slotted MNG **604**. The slotted MNG **604** could represent the MNG **100** shown in FIGS. **1A** and **1B** above. As noted previously, a slotted MNG can provide the same or similar functionality as a larger conventional nozzle (such as a cylindrical or conical nozzle) but in a smaller package. In some embodiments, the slotted MNG **604** could have a length that is roughly 20% the length of a conventional nozzle. This can

6

provide significant volume and weight reductions. The remaining components of the assembly **600** are not described here as they do not relate to the use of a slotted MNG.

Although FIG. **6** illustrates one example of an engine and nozzle assembly **600** of a vehicle with a slotted MNG, various changes may be made to FIG. **6**. For example, a slotted MNG could be used with any suitable larger device or system, such as any vehicle using a liquid propulsion system.

FIG. **7** illustrates an example method **700** for forming a slotted MNG with integrated cooling channels in accordance with this disclosure. As shown in FIG. **7**, the design for a slotted MNG is identified at step **702**. This could include, for example, using the technique shown in FIGS. **5A** through **5I** to design a slotted MNG **100**. As a particular example, this could include identifying the number and size of multiple cooling channels **116** and the number and arrangement of multiple slotlettes.

A plate of material is obtained at step **704**. This could include, for example, forming material into the desired overall shape of the MNG **100**. This could be accomplished by machining a piece of material into the desired shape or using a mold to form material into the desired shape.

Cooling channels are formed through the plate at step **706**, and elongated slotlettes are formed through the plate at step **708**. This could include, for example, drilling or otherwise forming the cooling channels **116** through the plate **102**. This could also include machining or otherwise forming the slotlettes **104** through the plate **102**. Note that any suitable technique could be used to form each feature of the MNG **100**. Formation of the slotted MNG is completed at step **710**. This could include, for example, forming flanges **114** or other features of the slotted MNG **100**.

Although FIG. **7** illustrates one example of a method **700** for forming a slotted MNG with integrated cooling channels, various changes may be made to FIG. **7**. For example, while shown as a series of steps, various steps in each figure could overlap, occur in parallel, or occur in a different order. As a particular example, the MNG **100** could be formed using a mold, and multiple features of the MNG **100** (such as the plate **102** itself along with the cooling channels **116** and/or the slotlettes **104**) could be formed at the same time.

In some embodiments, various functions described above are implemented or supported by a computer program that is formed from computer readable program code and that is embodied in a computer readable medium. The phrase "computer readable program code" includes any type of computer code, including source code, object code, and executable code. The phrase "computer readable medium" includes any type of medium capable of being accessed by a computer, such as read only memory (ROM), random access memory (RAM), a hard disk drive, a compact disc (CD), a digital video disc (DVD), or any other type of memory. A "non-transitory" computer readable medium excludes wired, wireless, optical, or other communication links that transport transitory electrical or other signals. A non-transitory computer readable medium includes media where data can be permanently stored and media where data can be stored and later overwritten, such as a rewritable optical disc or an erasable memory device.

It may be advantageous to set forth definitions of certain words and phrases used throughout this patent document. The term "elongated" refers to a shape where length is at least twice the distance as width. The terms "include" and "comprise," as well as derivatives thereof, mean inclusion without limitation. The term "or" is inclusive, meaning and/or. The phrase "associated with," as well as derivatives thereof, may mean to include, be included within, interconnect with, con-

7

tain, be contained within, connect to or with, couple to or with, be communicable with, cooperate with, interleave, juxtapose, be proximate to, be bound to or with, have, have a property of, have a relationship to or with, or the like. The phrase "at least one of," when used with a list of items, means that different combinations of one or more of the listed items may be used, and only one item in the list may be needed. For example, "at least one of: A, B, and C" includes any of the following combinations: A, B, C, A and B, A and C, B and C, and A and B and C.

While this disclosure has described certain embodiments and generally associated methods, alterations and permutations of these embodiments and methods will be apparent to those skilled in the art. Accordingly, the above description of example embodiments does not define or constrain this disclosure. Other changes, substitutions, and alterations are also possible without departing from the spirit and scope of this disclosure, as defined by the following claims.

What is claimed is:

1. An apparatus comprising:
 - a slotted multi-nozzle grid comprising a plate configured to be connected to an outlet of a combustion chamber of a thruster and to allow combustion gases generated in the combustion chamber to flow in a longitudinal direction through the slotted multi-nozzle grid, the plate having a thickness in the longitudinal direction, the plate comprising:
 - multiple slotlettes that extend through the thickness of the plate, each of the slotlettes elongated in a direction that is generally normal to the longitudinal direction, at least some of the slotlettes arranged in multiple rows and each of the multiple slotlettes having a convergent input, a divergent output, and a narrower throat portion separating the convergent input and the divergent output; and
 - multiple cooling channels through the plate, at least some of the cooling channels located between the rows of slotlettes, each of the multiple cooling channels configured to transport coolant through the plate in order to cool the plate;
 - wherein at least some of the rows include two or more of the at least some of the slotlettes.
2. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein two adjacent slotlettes in one row of the at least some of the rows are separated by a structural ligament.
3. The apparatus of claim 2, wherein the structural ligament has a tear-drop cross-sectional shape.
4. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein each convergent input and divergent output has substantially straight sides and rounded ends, each divergent output having a larger height than each convergent input.
5. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein:
 - the at least some of the slotlettes in two adjacent rows have convergent inputs that angle towards one another and divergent outputs that angle towards one another; and
 - one of the multiple cooling channels resides within an area between the convergent inputs and the divergent outputs of the at least some of the slotlettes in the two adjacent rows.
6. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein:
 - the plate further comprises multiple ribs; and
 - at least some of the ribs form a first portion of the at least some of the slotlettes in one row and a second portion of the at least some of the slotlettes in an adjacent row.
7. The apparatus of claim 6, wherein each of the at least some of the ribs has a tear-drop or airfoil cross-sectional shape.

8

8. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein each of the multiple cooling channels is substantially straight through the plate.

9. A system comprising:

- a thruster comprising a combustion chamber configured to generate combustion gases that flow in a longitudinal direction; and

- a slotted multi-nozzle grid connected to an outlet of the combustion chamber of the thruster and through which the combustion gases pass, the slotted multi-nozzle grid comprising a plate having a thickness in the longitudinal direction, the plate comprising:

- multiple slotlettes that extend through the thickness of the plate, each of the slotlettes elongated in a direction that is generally normal to the longitudinal direction, at least some of the slotlettes arranged in multiple rows and each of the multiple slotlettes having a convergent input, a divergent output, and a narrower throat portion separating the convergent input and the divergent output; and

- multiple cooling channels through the plate, at least some of the cooling channels located between the rows of slotlettes, each of the multiple cooling channels configured to transport coolant through the plate in order to cool the plate;

wherein at least some of the rows include two or more of the at least some of the slotlettes.

10. The system of claim 9, wherein two adjacent slotlettes in one row of the at least some of the rows are separated by a structural ligament.

11. The system of claim 10, wherein the structural ligament has a tear-drop cross-sectional shape.

12. The system of claim 9, wherein each convergent input and divergent output has substantially straight sides and rounded ends, each divergent output having a larger height than each convergent input.

13. The system of claim 9, wherein:

- the plate further comprises multiple ribs; and

- at least some of the ribs form a first portion of the at least some of the slotlettes in one row and a second portion of the at least some of the slotlettes in an adjacent row.

14. The system of claim 13, wherein each of the at least some of the ribs has a tear-drop or airfoil cross-sectional shape.

15. The system of claim 9, wherein the thruster comprises a portion of a propulsion system on a vehicle.

16. A method of forming a slotted multi-nozzle grid, the method comprising:

- obtaining a plate having a thickness in a longitudinal direction;

- forming multiple slotlettes that extend through the thickness of the plate, each of the slotlettes elongated in a direction that is generally normal to the longitudinal direction, at least some of the slotlettes arranged in multiple rows and each of the multiple slotlettes having a convergent input, a divergent output, and a narrower throat portion separating the convergent input and the divergent output; and

- forming multiple cooling channels through the plate, each of the multiple cooling channels configured to transport coolant through the plate in order to cool the plate;

wherein at least some of the cooling channels are located between the rows of slotlettes;

wherein at least some of the rows include two or more of the at least some of the slotlettes; and

wherein the plate is configured to be connected to an outlet of a combustion chamber of a thruster and to allow

combustion gases generated in the combustion chamber to flow in the longitudinal direction through the slotted multi-nozzle grid.

17. The method of claim **16**, wherein forming the slotted multi-nozzle grid comprises one of: 5

machining the plate to form the multiple slotlettes and the multiple cooling channels; and

molding material to form the plate along with at least one of the multiple slotlettes and the multiple cooling channels.

18. The method of claim **16**, wherein two adjacent slot- 10
lettes in one row of the at least some of the rows are separated by a structural ligament.

19. The method of claim **16**, wherein:

the plate further comprises multiple ribs; and

at least some of the ribs form a first portion of the at least 15
some of the slotlettes in one row and a second portion of the at least some of the slotlettes in an adjacent row.

20. The method of claim **16**, wherein the thruster comprises a portion of a propulsion system on a vehicle.

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